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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/820,530	03/29/2001	Kazutoyo Machiro	6514-9	5426
7055	7590	10/17/2005	EXAMINER	
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C. 1950 ROLAND CLARKE PLACE RESTON, VA 20191			ZHONG, CHAD	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2152	

DATE MAILED: 10/17/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/820,530	MAEHIRO, KAZUTOYO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Chad Zhong	2152	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
 THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 September 2005.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 10 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

FINAL ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: Amendment A, filed on 09/06/2005. This action has been made final.

2. Claims 1-10 are presented for examination. In amendment A, filed on 09/06/2005:

Claims 1, 5, and 9 are amended.

Claim 10 is cancelled.

Claims 2-4, and 6-8 are previously presented.

Applicant's remarks filed 09/06/2005 have been considered but are not persuasive in view at new grounds of rejection as necessitated by Applicant's arguments.

3. It is noted that although the present application does contain line numbers in specification and claims, the line numbers in the claims do not correspond to the preferred format. The preferred format is to number each line of every claim, with each claim beginning with line 1. For ease of reference by both the Examiner and Applicant all future correspondence should include the recommended line numbering.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Riddle, US 5,854,898, in view of "Introduction to Battlenet", Battlenet, 2000.

6. As per claim 1, Riddle teaches an electronic conference joining method in which a chairman who opens an electronic conference in which guests who join said electronic conference send a request for access to said area to from the terminals of the guests, the method comprising (Col. 1, lines 10-15; Col. 3, lines 24-27; Col. 5, lines 29-35; Col. 7, lines 1-5):

storing setup information for setting said area in a storage section of a chairman's terminal (Col. 7, lines 39-42),

creating from the chairman's terminal an invitation message comprising said setup information stored in said storage section (Col. 7, lines 1-10, lines 35-67),

giving an instruction from the chairman's terminal for transmission of said invitation message (Col. 8, lines 42-52),

transmitting from the chairman's terminal an invitation signal comprising said setup information to said guests' terminals based on said instruction (Col. 7, lines 40-67),

receiving at the guests' terminals said invitation signal and obtaining said setup information (Col. 8, lines 40-62),

creating at the guests' terminals an access request signal comprising said setup information (Col. 7, lines 50-67; Col. 2, lines 5-11), and

transmitting from the guests' terminals to said database, said access request signal solely in response to each guest's instruction (Col. 7, lines 10-15).

a database for storing chat setup information (Col. 11, lines 30-45; Col. 20, lines 25-45);

Riddle does not explicitly teach database for storing chat messages, however, Riddle teaches a system to store merge and join messages. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Riddle to provide chat message storage in order keep track of history of the chat for future review purposes.

Riddle does not explicitly teach a video game terminal, however, Battlenet teaches user video

game terminals log onto a centralized network to play games and conducting chat utilizing the central network servers ("What is Battlenet?, pg 1"). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine teachings of Riddle and Battlenet because allowing for plurality of video game terminals to interact with each other and providing chat service within the centralized network as taught by Battlenet would improve the communications of Riddle by allowing for centralized chatrooms for video game terminals to be able to set up games and providing interactive communication with other players.

7. As per claim 2, Riddle teaches said setup information comprises at least one of a name of said electronic conference and a code number for accessing said area of said database (Col. 7, lines 60-67).

8. As per claim 3, Riddle teaches receiving at the chairman's terminal, an opening response signal from said server, said opening response signal indicating that said area has been set in said database, said opening response signal comprises an ID number for allowing said server to identify said area of said database (Col. 5, lines 29-35; Col. 7, lines 60-67),

transmitting from the chairman's terminal said invitation signal containing said ID number, and adding said ID number contained in said invitation signal to said access request signal (Col. 7, lines 50-67).

9. As per claim 4, Riddle teaches the electronic conference joining method according to claim 3, wherein said setup information comprises at least one of a name of said electronic conference and a code number for accessing said area of said database (Col. 7, lines 60-67).

10. As per claims 5-8, claims 5-8 are rejected for the same reasons as rejection to claims 1-4 above respectively.

11. As per claims 9-10, claims 9-10 are rejected for the same reasons as rejection to claim 1 above.

Response to Arguments:

12. In the remarks, Applicant argued in substance that Riddle does not disclose a video game environment. In response to Applicant's arguments, although Riddle does not disclose a video game environment, a similar system "battlenet" is relied upon to show it is advantageous to have chat support for a video game service, especially for vast multiplayer online environment. The chat service offered with battlenet provides critical communications means to the online gaming experience.

13. In the remarks, Applicant argued in substance that Riddle does not teach a database requiring storage of messages.

In response to Applicant's arguments, the conference is taken place on a conference server, the users log onto particular chatrooms instantiated within the server and the chat is carried out thereafter. Refer to Col. 13, lines 50-60 and Col. 14, lines 5-10 for details.

14. In the remarks, Applicant argued in substance that Riddle does not disclose or suggest a chairman's terminal storing setup information for setting an area on the database.

In response to Applicant's remarks, Riddle's conference initiator provides access information in the form of account number and password of a conference to each of the users he/she is inviting to the chatroom (Col. 7, lines 60-67), the information is then stored and used to access said chatroom at later point in time (Col. 10, lines 55-60).

15. In the remark, Applicant argued in substance that Riddle does not teach transmitting the access request signal and transmitting the invitation signal solely in response to the instructions of the chairman/guest.

In response to Applicant's remarks, Riddle teaches the first user initiates the conference as well as parameters associated with the conference, i.e. conference name, conference settings. After appropriate configuration, the first user is to call other members to join the conference/chat. Refer to Col. 10, lines 10-53 for specific details.

Conclusion

16. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reined of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

17. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following patents and publications are cited to further show the state of the art with respect to "Method And Apparatus For Joining Electronic Conference".

- i. US 6708172 Wong et al.
- ii. US 6651086 Manber et al.
- iii. US 5793365 Tang et al.
- iv. US 6,412,073 Rangan.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chad Zhong whose telephone number is (571)272-3946. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:15 to 4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, JAROENCHONWANIT, BUNJOB can be reached on (571)272-3913. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

CZ

September 17, 2005



BUNJOB JAROENCHONWANIT
PRIMARY EXAMINER